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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 000275

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/26/2016

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SUBJECT: BAHRAIN FM PLEASED WITH ABU DHABI MEETING WITH SECRETARY RICE

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Classified By: Ambassador William T. Monroe. Reason: 1.4 (B)(D)

¶1. (C) In a brief conversation with the Ambassador February 25, Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid Al-Khalifa expressed great pleasure with the opportunity to meet with the Secretary and fellow GCC Ministers in Abu Dhabi February 23, terming it a "wonderful meeting." Focusing on the discussions about Hamas, he said that the Ministers described the current situation as "delicate and dangerous," but believed that the election could mark a turning point for Hamas as it takes on the responsibility of actually governing. He said that Hamas will have to recognize the right of Israel to exist, and that GCC countries will send the message that it must do so and continue the initiative for peace. If Hamas does not, it will no longer be their partner. Finally, he said that the GCC Ministers appreciated the Secretary's position that humanitarian aid to the Palestinians will continue.

¶2. (C) Shaikh Khalid confirmed that he will accompany Crown Prince Shaikh Salman in a visit to Washington March 20-21. He said that one of the subjects that the Crown Prince will bring up is a desire for security assurances if Iran acquires a nuclear capability.

MONROE